IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-13 (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method for *managing*~~monitoring~~ a plurality of servers in a cluster, ~~and taking corrective action for said servers,~~ said method comprising the steps of:

setting a threshold equal to an integer greater than one;

sending a request to one of said servers, determining that said one server *is currently operational but* did not successfully handle said request within a predetermined amount of time, *and in response,* incrementing a count, comparing said count to said threshold, determining that said count is less than said threshold and *in response,* ~~therefore,~~ taking no corrective action; and

sending another request to said one server, determining that said one server *is currently operational but* did not successfully handle said request within said predetermined amount of time, *and in response,* incrementing said count, comparing said count to said threshold, determining that said count equals or exceeds said threshold and ~~therefore, taking corrective action~~ *in response, automatically initiating a memory dump of said one server*.

15. (Currently Amended) A method as set forth in claim 14, ~~wherein~~

wherein said servers reside on a network;

wherein the first said request and said other request are test requests to determine if said one server is currently operational and handles the test requests within said predetermined amount of time;

further comprising the steps of client computers sending client requests to a network dispatcher for said servers, and said network dispatcher dispatching said client requests to said servers including said one server;

wherein said first request, said other request and the automatic initiation of the memory dump bypass said network dispatcher. ~~said corrective action is to remove said one server from said cluster or not send additional requests to said one server.~~

Claims 16-19 (Canceled)

Please enter new claims 20-25 as follows:

20. (New) A system for managing a plurality of servers in a cluster, said system comprising:

means for setting a threshold equal to an integer greater than one;

means for sending a request to one of said servers, determining that said one server is not currently operational, is currently operational and handled said request after a first predetermined time but before a second, greater predetermined time, or is currently operational and did not handle said request by said second predetermined time, and in response, incrementing a count, comparing said count to said threshold, and determining that said count is less than said threshold and in response, taking no corrective action; and

means for sending another request to said one server, determining that said one server is not currently operational, is currently operational and handled said request after said first predetermined time but before said second predetermined time, or is currently operational and did not handle said request by said second predetermined time, and in response, incrementing said count, comparing said count to said threshold, and determining that said count equals or exceeds said threshold, and

means, responsive to said one server not currently being operational, for automatically issuing a remote restart of said one server,

means, responsive to said one server currently being operational and handling said request after said first predetermined time but before said second predetermined time, for automatically notifying a dispatcher for said one server to reduce a rate of dispatching new requests to said one server, and

means, responsive to said one server currently being operational but not handling said request by said second predetermined time, for automatically initiating a memory dump of said one server.

21. (New) A system as set forth in claim 20, wherein said servers reside on a network, and the first said request and said other request are test requests to determine if said one server is currently operational and handles the test requests within said predetermined amount of time; and

further comprising a network dispatcher for receiving client requests from client computers and dispatching said client requests to said servers including said one server; and

wherein said first request, said other request and the automatic initiation of the memory dump bypass said network dispatcher.

22. (New) A system for managing a plurality of servers in a cluster, said system comprising:

means for setting a threshold equal to an integer greater than one;

means for sending a request to one of said servers, determining that said one server is currently operational but did not successfully handle said request within a predetermined amount of time, and in response, incrementing a count, comparing said count to said threshold, determining that said count is less than said threshold and in response, taking no corrective action; and

means for sending another request to said one server, determining that said one server is currently operational but did not successfully handle said request within said predetermined amount of time, and in response, incrementing said count, comparing said count to said threshold, and determining that said count equals or exceeds said threshold and in response, automatically initiating a memory dump of said one server.

23. (New) A system as set forth in claim 22, wherein said servers reside on a network, and the first said request and said other request are test requests to determine if said one server is currently operational and handles the test requests within said predetermined amount of time; and

further comprising a network dispatcher for receiving client requests from said client computers and dispatching said client requests to said servers including said one server; and

wherein said first request, said other request and the automatic initiation of the memory dump bypass said network dispatcher.

24. (New) A system for managing a plurality of servers in a cluster, said system comprising:

means for sending a request to one of said servers, determining that said one server is not currently operational, is currently operational and handled said request after a first predetermined time but before a second, greater predetermined time, or is currently operational and did not handle said request by said second predetermined time;

means, responsive to said one server not currently being operational, for automatically issuing a remote restart of said one server,

means, responsive to said one server currently being operational and handling said request after said first predetermined time but before said second predetermined time, for automatically notifying a dispatcher for said one server to reduce a rate of dispatching new requests to said one server, and

means, responsive to said one server currently being operational but not handling said request by said second predetermined time, for automatically initiating a memory dump of said one server.

25. (New) A system as set forth in claim 24, wherein said servers reside on a network, and the first said request and said other request are test requests to determine if said one server is currently operational and handles the test requests within said predetermined amount of time; and

further comprising a network dispatcher for receiving client requests from client computers and dispatching said client requests to said servers including said one server; and

wherein said first request, said other request and the automatic initiation of the memory dump bypass said network dispatcher.